THEOSOPHY

VOL. 66, NO. 10 AUGUST, 1978

In one word, our whole aim and desire are to help, in at least some degree, toward arriving at correct scientific views upon the nature of man, which carry with them the means of reconstructing for the present generation the deductive metaphysical or transcendental philosophy which alone is the firm, unshakable foundation of every religious philosophy. Theosophy, the universal solvent, is fulfilling its mission; the opalescent tints of the dawn of modern psychology are blending together, and will all be merged into the perfect daylight of truth, when the sun-orb of Eastern esotericism has mounted to its noon-stage.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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AUM

Verily man is formed of Will; according as a man's will is, in this world, according to that is his being, on going forth hence. Let him perform his will.

—*Chandogya Upanishad*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 66 AUGUST, 1978 NUMBER 10

RIGHT IDEAS IN SIMPLEST FORM

HUMAN action is on the plane of thought. While many of the things we do may seem to be quite "physical"—since we build houses, invent and drive automobiles, erect cities, and accomplish so much with bodies that have acquired habits and skills in actions which seem little related to thought—some reflection shows that behind all this behavior, *thinking* is the primal cause. The intelligent egos who create these forms of action express the purposes of their thinking in the world of material existence, becoming able to do this by involvement in the kingdoms of nature. An *incarnation* is a descent into matter and flesh; man, as Christian doctrine declares, is the Word or Logos (thought) made flesh. As Mr. Judge says (*Gita Notes*, p. 24):

> Coming like a spark from the central fire, it [man's essence] partakes of that nature, that is, the quality of being unmodifiable, and assumes to itself—as a cover, so to speak—the human body and thus, being in essence unmodified, it has the capacity to perceive all the changes going on around the body.

The physical world is indeed the expression of the expanded idea of the human essence. An understanding of that world begins with recognition that it is the creation of thought in the shape of ideas. This meeting of spirit and matter defines the nature of man and presents to his mind the dual aspect of all reality in manifestation. H.P.B. speaks of this early in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 6), where, quoting a Upanishad, she says that Parabrahm "is that which is supreme, and not supreme"

—supreme, that is, as cause, not supreme as effect. As we look out on the world of experience, we see effects, not causes. The senses now active in us perceive the world of effects, which have the forms and shapes and behavior thought has given them. These make the "conditions" of the world of conditioned existence in which we live.

Since our awareness assigns reality to effects, it is natural for us to think that certainty of knowledge lies only in the study of effects. We call this study Science, which takes in all that can be classified as reliable and provable fact. This is the area of experience or action where effect, or *Karma,* is supreme. Our study in this field gives us knowledge of what *is*—or rather, of a limited portion of what is, since there are subtler results of causation by thought which are not visible to the physical eye. There are psychic effects as well as physical ones, and only now is their reality beginning to be suspected by men of science, while the laws which operate in the psychic world are understood hardly at all.

We might call the other aspect of Parabrahm—that which is supreme as cause—the sphere of religion. Religion deals with the fulfillment of human purpose. On higher planes, cause and purpose are indistinguishable, since for spiritual intelligence having an idea or intention is itself a cause which has effects. When reflected in the personal life of human beings, the divine purpose which brought the whole universe into being (cosmically the will to be, and for man the will to know) becomes aspiration, longing and the struggle toward fulfillment. In this the idea of the self, as well as the resulting idea of the world, becomes the controlling principle. Religions, in other words, while they begin as true teachings about the nature of things and of the self, are adapted to the limited ideas of a particular age. Misconceptions of the self create the misconceptions in both science and religion.

For example, the attainment of a religious goal is widely regarded as dependent upon the benevolence of some outside force or God. This is relying on conditions or effects rather than upon ourselves. The same applies to the kind of science we know. It teaches the omnipresence and domination of certain blind physical forces which are simply *there,* of which we are the result and which must be obeyed. Only those forces are admitted to be "real." In a time when scientific thought is uppermost, religion is

inevitably redefined—however deviously—in scientific terms and made subordinate to the external conditions which are believed to prevail. There is a great deal borrowed from science in some of the new religions of the present day, which helps to explain the fashionable emphasis on "spiritual techniques." Wherever the idea of primary cause is identified with something less than Parabrahm—the unmodifiable essence in man—what we speak of as Materialism is in control. Materialism is mistaking cause for effect, effect for cause.

"The real point of issue," a wise student once said, "is *the divine nature in man.*" That divine nature exists in potentiality in each one, but its invitation to action awaits recognition that it is there. Hence, by all philosophers worthy of the name, self-knowledge is held to be the key to all growth and truth.

How shall we know the Self? Here, again, the instruction comes in one voice. Knowledge of the self requires not only study of what lies within but also an understanding of its reflections without. Those reflections were produced by the powers of the Self. "Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver of external shadows? If thou dost not—then art thou lost." They create the vast region where Parabrahm is not supreme—the world of effects. The reflections are the conditions we have made, the objective panorama of our expanded idea, in which we live. How did we make those conditions? The question almost answers itself. We learn how those conditions were produced by the study of Karma and Reincarnation:

> Without Karma and Reincarnation evolution is but a fragment; a process whose beginnings are unknown, and whose outcome cannot be discerned; a glimpse of what might be; a hope of what should be. But in the light of Karma and Reincarnation evolution becomes the logic of what *must* be.

Through Karma and Reincarnation cause and effect are examined in close conjunction with one another. We learn to think of ourselves as cause—as eternally causing beings—and of the world as the effects of the causes we were responsible for. Both aspects of Parabrahm are in us. We need to set certain causes in motion in order to learn what we are here to learn. Yet we cannot act wisely without understanding the world in which we live. The fulfillment of purpose requires knowledge of the conditions of existence, made by the powers of the Self. Hence, in studying

Karma and Reincarnation we synthesize cause and effect. This study is an extended way of saying to ourselves, "That Thou art."

The same synthesis is provided on a much larger scale by *The Secret Doctrine*. The first volume presents Cosmogenesis—an account of the becoming of the world. This volume, then, is a treatise of Theosophical or occult science. It deals with the effects of the flow of ideas from Universal Mind—the flow through graded hierarchies of beings of mind—generating the world of material existence. Cosmogenesis, in this philosophy, is really cosmic psychology—the study of the expansion followed by concretion of ideas. The distinctive and unique character of H.P.B.'s text is that nowhere is there actual separation between the effects considered and their original and animating cause. The two aspects of Parabrahm are considered together, just as spirit and matter are considered together. Their unity in Parabraham, and in man, is continually affirmed, even while their polarities are recognized as having a relative independence during the cycle of manifestation. That independence makes the Mahamaya, which is overcome only by learning how it was produced.

The second volume, which deals with Anthropogenesis, is concerned with ourselves. It gives the history of mankind. But as becomes evident, that history has for its framework the structures set forth in Cosmogenesis. Our unmodifiable essence dwells within, but the path of our experience is through the states of matter established first in idea and then in form and substance. Yet *learning* about all these states, which is another way of studying the self—in terms of its powers and their use—becomes "a journey of the 'pilgrim-soul' through various *states* of *not only matter* but Self-consciousness and self-perception." (*S.D.* I, 175.) We experience the world through our senses, but we learn to *know* it through consciousness and self-conscious effort, which is at the same time "self-perception."

Knowing the world is essential. Ignorance of the world is also ignorance of the self. Hence the teaching about the world, which in Theosophy is interlaced with teaching of the self and its powers. It is for this reason that Theosophy is called a Scientific Religion and a Religious Science. The two studies, the outer and the inner, are joined and made inseparable, since to pursue them separately is to invite delusion after delusion.

Yet, the primary truth, for us, is self-knowledge. Why should this be? Is not the world equally important? We may admit that without a world there would be no conscious self, yet, during manifestation of the world, by reason of the capacity of Manas for self-deception, there is a natural tendency to see as real only that which is outside, perceptible to the senses. By this preoccupation, the self is lost sight of or forgotten. Its vision and knowledge are neglected because no longer sought. Man is cribbed, cabined, and confined by his false idea of self. The world, then, as seen by Theosophy, is only the condition of life, but not its ultimate fate. It is the ladder of being, not the eternal reality. It is a creation by idea which can be uncreated, altered, modified, improved. It is not destiny but the raw material of destiny. The world is what we make it. These are the "facts of life" which have primary emphasis in Theosophy.

We are now confronted by the seeming reality of "Time." If we are to be convinced that we have made this world and that we can change it, there is need to realize that the process of reforming the world will take *time*. The manipulation of the effects of previous action, as they appear in the world of matter, is not the same sort of action as generating on a higher plane causes which have less confining effects. Effective change, for human beings, is always a form of growth, and it is equally necessary to *grow* another kind of world. This means a transfer of our attention from the plane of matter to the plane of ideas and inner relationships. For causes there initiated to manifest as effects, new forms of action have to be evolved. The thoughts which can accomplish this have first to be evolved. We have to develop mental vehicles to transmit the energies of this sort of action. As was said, this takes time. It is a learning as well as a creative process.

What sort of learning is involved? The first step is to think of ourselves as *capable* of this sort of higher action. We try to absorb teachings which declare these capacities, and we have manuals of instruction on how to develop and use them. But no more than a child, given a hammer and a set of blueprints, is able to set about building a house, can we take these teachings and realize in a day or a year the fruit of what they promise. A vast program of retraining the lives in both body and mind is required. Little by little we come to see the world as the Wise see it, and the

self-perception which accompanies this learning also makes it possible. It is the self-perception which has the greatest encouragement in Theosophy. Self-perception, balanced by perception of the workings of law and the duration of cycles, brings both patience and perseverance. These two qualities are preservations, not inversions, of attributes of the higher ego when placed under the influence or control of material conditions.

Theosophical education is the generation of a field of ideative influences which encourages and supports self-perception during the study of the conditions of the world, as explained by the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. For practical purposes, self-perception means a growing realization of the powers in man. It also means self-confidence and self-determination. It means the practice of the virtues as given in *The Voice of the Silence*. Such possibilities are taught or described, but they must also be *discovered*. A heard truth is not the same as a truth discovered. A heard truth has only the reality of a reflection. It may be a faithful reflection, but the discovered truth has in it the pulse of life and its energizing power. The art of teaching, then, is to know how to put the truths to be heard into forms which invite independent discovery.

The Theosophical books are illustrations of this art. They are examples of its practice at different levels of man's differentiated nature. The texts all draw from the same wellspring of truth, but their instruction and counsels speak to us in different ways. *The Secret Doctrine* engages and well-nigh overwhelms the most developed aspect of our intellect. *The Ocean of Theosophy* appeals to the everyday intelligence without issuing the intellectual challenges brought to the fore by *The Secret Doctrine*. The essential content of the challenges is no doubt dealt with in the *Ocean*, but in the simple terms of ordinary existence, without being garbed in the abstractions and theories of contemporary science. The devotional books speak to certain resonances of intuition which are either active or latent for every human being. The *Book of Devotion* makes some use of our intellectual knowledge, yet moves from an inner stance, employing symbols which have natural correspondence with human self-perception and inner awareness however faint of innate possibilities.

The reader of the *Voice* has opportunity to constitute himself one of the disciples who "may be likened to the strings of the

soul-echoing Vina," with mankind as sounding-board, while the hand that sweeps it is "the tuneful breath of the GREAT WORLD-SOUL." While we go about in the world, those vibrations may nonetheless be heard if we give them our attention. They open channels for the expression of the indwelling ego, awakening feelings natural to the aspiring soul. One who begins to sense this inspiration becomes able to study the teachings about the world—its origin and states and planes—with more of the perspective of the eye of the Soul. Thus knowledge of the world and the self reinforce each other, and inner growth is the result.

The emphasis in Theosophical education is always on human possibility. Existing limitations are there, to be recognized, defined, coped with, and gradually overcome, but an exhaustive treatment of the conditions of life alone, with no attention to human potentiality, would have the effect of turning those conditions into absolute determinants. This would be misrepresentation of both Self and the World. Education is far more a matter of balance in relation to the facts of life than it is an endless cataloguing of them.

The static, uncreative attitude of so many people, especially the learned, in relation to the present-day world is due to neglect of the ranges of human possibility. The science of our time does not deal with possibilities, but only with established effects. And the effects that science is willing to take cognizance of must be so firmly fixed as to practically force themselves on our attention —as, gravitation, for example, announces its reality when we stumble or fall. In other words, science deals with the area of experience where Parabrahm is least of all "supreme," where only effects are visible and are so well-defined that their typical characteristics can be summed up as laws of nature. In such a period, religion is identified mainly by its impotence to influence human behavior. The only power that can affect man for good is the self-perception which leads to thinking of oneself as cause, and recognizing the effects as the not-self.

No one has put the priority of self-knowledge more clearly than Mr. Judge, in "The Synthesis of Occult Science." He says:

> H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* is a storehouse of scientific facts, but this is not its chief value. These facts are placed, approximately at least, in such relation to the synthesis or philosophy of occultism as to render comparatively easy the task of

> the student who is in search of real knowledge, and to further his progress beyond all preconception, provided he is teachable, in earnest, and intelligent. Nowhere else in English literature is the Law of Evolution given such sweep and swing. It reminds one of the ceaseless undertone of the deep sea, and seems to view our Earth in all its changes "from the birth of time to the crack of doom." It follows man in his triple evolution, physical, mental, and spiritual, throughout the perfect circle of his boundless life. Darwinism had reached its limits and a rebound. Man is indeed evolved from lower forms. But *which* man? the physical? the psychical? the intellectual? or the spiritual? The Secret Doctrine points where the lines of evolution and involution meet; where matter and spirit clasp hands; and where the rising animal stands face to face with the fallen god; for *all natures* meet and mingle in man.

Those who seek to engage in the work of Theosophical education soon realize the value of Mr. Judge's simple expressions and recurring appeals to the spontaneous higher longings which belong to the present cycle. He has a language that satisfies the mind and touches the heart. He speaks to the best in men, but in wholly unpretentious ways. One who learned from him well—perhaps better than any other—gave this advice to students:

> The right kind of Theosophical talking comes only from practice. It is not merely the use of a facile vocabulary, but the possession of well-digested ideas that is necessary. These come only from constant study and application. Frequent reading of articles by W.Q.J. develops the tendency to present the right ideas in the simplest form, and these ideas become a mental storehouse which can be drawn upon at will. It is not so necessary that we understand the deeply metaphysical concepts of Theosophy, as it is to comprehend the fundamentals and be able to make an application of them to every problem of life. W.Q.J.'s articles will be found to contain "alphabet, grammar and composition," or, in other words, a basis for right ideas, right thinking and right application. A daily reading from his writings is advisable. One who does this cannot help but imbibe—absorb—the spirit of them, and become an exponent who is at once deep, simple and convincing. (*The Friendly Philosopher, pages* 126-127.)

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THE RACES OF MAN

IV: THE ATLANTEANS

THE "days of Sinners" meant the days when matter would be in its full sway on Earth, and man would have reached the apex of physical development in stature and animality. That came to pass during the period of the Atlanteans, about the middle point of their Race (the 4th), which was drowned as prophesied by Uriel. There is a period of a few millions of years to cover between the first "mindless" race and the highly intelligent and *intellectual* later "Lemurians"; there is another between the earliest civilization of the Atlanteans and the historic period.

It is only after the so-called FALL, that the races began to develop rapidly into a purely human shape. Strictly speaking, it is only from the time of the Atlantean, brown and yellow giant Races, that one ought to speak of MAN, since it was the Fourth race only which was the first *completely human species,* however much larger in size than we are now. It is chiefly that race which became "black with sin" that brought the divine names of the Asuras, the Rakshasas and the Daityas into disrepute, and passed them on to posterity as the names of fiends. The Rakshasas are not *demons,* but simply the primitive and ferocious giants, the Atlanteans, who were scattered on the face of the globe as the Fifth Race is now. For there *were* "giants" in the days of old, indeed, and the evolutionary series of the animal world is a warrant that the same thing took place within the human races.

The term "Atlantean" must not mislead the reader to regard these as one race only, or even a nation. It is as though one said "Asiatics." Many, multityped, and various were the Atlanteans, who represented several *humanities,* and almost a countless number of races and nations, more varied indeed than would be the "Europeans" were this name to be given indiscriminately to the five existing parts of the world. . . . There were brown, red, yellow, white and black Atlanteans; giants and dwarfs (as some African tribes comparatively are, even now).

NOTE.—This is the fourth part of a six-part series on the races of mankind, collated from *The Secret Doctrine.*

Nor can we laugh at the universal belief that we had giant ancestors. The fact that the bones of the mammoth and mastodon, and, in one case, those of a gigantic salamander, have been mistaken for human bones, does not make away with the difficulty that, of all the mammalians, man is the only one whom science will not allow to have dwarfed down, like all other animal frames, from the giant *homo diluvii* to the creature between 5 and 6 feet that he is now. And if in our own day we occasionally find men and women from 7 ft. to even 9 ft. and 11 ft. high, this only proves—on the law of atavism, or the reappearance of ancestral features of character—that there was a time when 9 ft. and 10 ft. was the average height of humanity, even in our latest Indo-European race. *Cremation was universal* till a comparatively recent period—some 80, or 100,000 years ago. The real giants, moreover, were nearly all drowned with Atlantis.

It is the Third Race and the gigantic Atlanteans, the memory of whom lingered from one generation and race to another generation and race down to the days of Moses, and which found an objective form in those antediluvian giants, those terrible sorcerers and magicians, of whom the Roman Church has preserved such vivid and at the same time distorted legends.

It was at this period—during the highest point of civilization and knowledge, as also of human intellectuality, of the fourth, Atlantean Race—that, owing to the final crisis of physiologico-spiritual adjustment of the races, humanity branched off into its two diametrically opposite paths: the RIGHT- and the LEFT-hand paths of knowledge or of Vidya. "*Thus were the germs of the White and Black Magic sown in those days. The seeds lay latent for some time, to sprout only during the early period of the Fifth (our Race).*" (*Commentary.*)

The Bible, from *Genes*is—to *Revelations,* is but a series of historical records of the great struggle between white and black Magic, between the Adepts of the right path, the Prophets, and those of the left, the Levites, the clergy of the brutal masses. . . . The great schism that arose between the sons of the Fourth Race, as soon as the first Temples and Halls of Initiation had been erected under the guidance of "the Sons of God," is allegorized in the Sons of Jacob.

It was the most ancient worship of all, that of the *third* Race of our Round, the Hermaphrodites, to whom the *male*-moon be-

came sacred, when after the "Fall" so-called, the sexes had become separated. "Deus Lunus" then became an androgyne, male and female in turn; to serve finally, for *purposes of sorcery,* as a dual power, to the *Fourth* Root-race, the Atlanteans. For besides being purely Occult, the rites of lunar worship were based, as just shown, upon a knowledge of physiology . . . , psychology, sacred mathematics, geometry and metrology, in their right applications to symbols and figures, which are but glyphs, recording observed natural and scientific *facts*; in short upon a most minute and profound knowledge of nature.

It was the Atlanteans, the first progeny of *semi-divine* man after his separation into sexes—hence the first-begotten and humanly-born mortals—who became the first "Sacrificers" to the *god of matter.* That worship degenerated very soon into *self-worship,* thence led to phallicism, or that which reigns supreme to this day in the symbolisms of every exoteric religion of ritual, dogma, and form. Phallicism began by the worship of the human body—that "miracle of miracles," . . . and ended by that of its respective sexes. The worshippers were giants in stature; but they were giants in knowledge and learning, though it came to them more easily than it does to the men of our modern times. Their Science was innate in them. The Lemuro-Atlantean had no need of discovering and fixing in his memory that which his informing PRINCIPLE *knew* at the moment of its incarnation. Time alone, and the ever-growing obtuseness of the matter in which the *Principles* had clothed themselves, could, the one, weaken the memory of their pre-natal knowledge, the other, blunt and even extinguish every spark of the spiritual and divine in them. There never was an *original* sin, but only an abuse of physical intelligence—the psychic being guided by the animal, and both putting out the light of the spiritual.

Creative powers in man were the gift of divine wisdom, not the result of sin. The curse was not brought on mankind by the Fourth Race, for the comparatively sinless Third Race, the still more gigantic Antediluvians, had perished in the same way; hence the Deluge was no punishment, but simply a result of a periodical and geological law. The secret teachings show that the "Deluge" overtook the Fourth, giant Race, not on account of their depravity, or because they had become "black with sin," but simply because such is the fate of every continent, which—like everything

else under our Sun—is born, lives, becomes decrepit, and dies. This was when the Fifth Race was in its infancy. A decree had come indeed; the decree of nature and the Law of Evolution, that the earth should change its race, and that the Fourth Race should be destroyed to make room for a better one. The Manvantara had reached its turning point of *three and a half Rounds,* and gigantic physical Humanity had reached the acme of gross materiality.

Nor was the curse of KARMA called down upon them for seeking *natural* union, as all the mindless animal-world does in its proper seasons; but, for abusing the creative power, for desecrating the divine gift, and wasting the life-essence for no purpose except bestial personal gratification . . . by turning the holy mystery of procreation into animal gratification. The law of Karma "bruised the *heel*" of the Atlantean race, by gradually changing physiologically, morally, physically, and mentally, the whole nature of the Fourth Race of mankind, until, from the healthy King of animal creation of the Third Race, man became in the Fifth, our race, the wealthiest heir on the globe to constitutional and hereditary diseases, the most consciously and intelligently bestial of all animals! This is the real CURSE from the physiological standpoint . . . viewed from this aspect, the curse is undeniable, for it is evident.

Thus the first Atlantean races, born on the Lemurian Continent, separated from their earliest tribes into the righteous and the unrighteous; into those who worshipped the one unseen Spirit of Nature, the ray of which man feels within himself—or the Pantheists, and those who offered fanatical worship to the Spirits of the Earth, the dark Cosmic, anthropomorphic Powers, with whom they made alliance.

The civilization of the Atlanteans was greater even than that of the Egyptians. It is their degenerate descendants, the nation of Plato's Atlantis, which built the first pyramids in the country, and that certainly before the advent of the "Eastern Æthiopians," as Herodotus called the Egyptians.

It is from the Fourth Race that the early Aryans got their knowledge of "the bundle of wonderful things," the *Sabha* and *Mayasabha*, mentioned in the Mahabhárata, the gift of Mayâsur to the Pándavas. It is from them that they learnt aëronautics, *Viwán Vidya* (the "knowledge of flying in air-vehicles"), and,

therefore, their great arts of meteorography and meteorology. It is from them, again, that the Aryans inherited their most valuable science of the hidden virtues of precious and other stones, of chemistry, or rather alchemy, of mineralogy, geology, physics and astronomy. When included under the arts and sciences of the fourth race, the Atlanteans, the phenomenal manifestation of the four elements, justly attributed by the believers in Cosmic gods to the intelligent interference of the latter, assumed a scientific character. The *magic* of the ancient priests consisted, in those days, in addressing *their gods in their own language* . . . this "language" is that of *incantations* or MANTRAS, as they are called in India, sound being *the most potent and effectual magic agent, and the first of the keys which opens the door of communication between Mortals and the Immortals.*

It is certain that, whether "chimera" or reality, the priests of the whole world had it from one and the same source: the universal tradition about the third great continent which perished some 850,000 years ago. A continent inhabited by two distinct races; distinct physically and especially morally; the early Aryans and the bulk of the Fourth Root Races—the former pious and meditative (*yoga*-contemplation), the latter—a fighting race of sorcerers, who were rapidly degenerating owing to their uncontrolled passions, both deeply versed in primeval wisdom and the secrets of nature; mutually antagonistic in their struggle, during the course and progress of their double evolution.

In the Esoteric Doctrine a third "war" is mentioned as taking place at the close of the 4th Race, between its adepts and those of the 5th Race, *i.e.*, between the Initiates of the "Sacred Island" and the Sorcerers of Atlantis. This war of gods with the powers of the Deep, refers also, in its last and terrestrial application, to the struggle between the Aryan adepts of the nascent Fifth Race and the Sorcerers of Atlantis, the Demons of the Deep, the Islanders surrounded with water who disappeared in the Deluge. Tradition maintains that the "Sons of God," or the great Initiates of the Sacred Island, took advantage of the Deluge, to rid the Earth of all the Sorcerers among the Atlanteans. The whole History of that period is allegorized in the *Ramayana*, which is the mystic narrative in epic form of the struggle between Rama—the first king of the *divine* dynasty of the early Aryans—and Ravana, the symbolical personation of the Atlantean (Lanka) race. The

former were the incarnations of the Solar Gods; the latter, of the lunar Devas. This was the great battle between Good and Evil, between white and black magic, for the supremacy of the divine forces, or of the lower terrestrial, or cosmic powers. The Ramayana—every line of which has to be read esoterically—discloses in magnificent symbolism and allegory the tribulations of both man and soul.

From the first appearance of the Aryan race, when the Pliocene portions of the once great Atlantis began gradually sinking and other continents to appear on the surface, down to the final disappearance of Plato's small island of Atlantis, the Aryan races had never ceased to fight with the descendants of the first giant races. This war lasted till nearly the close of the age which preceded the Kali Yug, and was the Mahabhâratean war so famous in Indian History. Such blending of the events and epochs, and the bringing down of hundreds of thousands into thousands of years, does not interfere with the numbers of years that had elapsed, according to the statement made by the Egyptian priests to Solon, since the destruction of the last portion of Atlantis. The 9,000 years were the correct figures given. The latter event has never been kept a secret, and had only faded out of the memory of the Greeks. The Egyptians had their records complete, because isolated; for, being surrounded by sea and desert, they had been left untrammelled by other nations, till about a few millenniums before our era.

Since the beginning of the Atlantean Race many million years have passed, yet we find the last of the Atlanteans, still mixed up with the Aryan element, 11,000 years ago. This shows the enormous overlapping of one race over the race which succeeds it, though in characters and external type the elder loses its characteristics, and assumes the new features of the younger race.

(*To be continued*)

Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

WESTERN OCCULTISM

In the great economy of Law and Nature, each being is exactly where he needs to be to eradicate defects; all necessary conditions are present for his growth. The only question lies with him; will he take them as "pain" or as opportunities?

As every law is spiritual, so all forms and things, forces and aspects must also be spiritual. All error springs from an effort to turn to small purposes the diversified streams of spiritual force.

We concentrate upon some things automatically, through habitude; this automatic habit has to be gradually changed, and *control* substituted. Success in doing thus is not to be had at once; it comes, first, by recognition of the right "attitude" toward every event.

We must have knowledge in order to use power rightly, but we must know that we are neither knowledge nor power; they are ours; to imagine that we are any given knowledge or power is illusion.

"To blend thy Mind and Soul" is to make the Mind subservient to the purposes of Soul, an instrument for use, not a cage of relativities in which to imprison ourselves.

The Law works just and true: "What has been, *is,* and shall be." We have power over nothing but the *"is."* It is by working with present conditions that the nature of the future is changed, and in no other way. This is reliance upon the Law, and a working under it. One thing that should be remembered in the midst of all difficulties is this: "When the lesson is learned, the necessity ceases." So should all strive for calmness, patience, and fortitude, and also have full confidence that the tide is bound to turn, even at the fifty-ninth minute of the eleventh hour.

There is plenty of material, as well as help, in the devotional books, to the realization of the *heart doctrine.* They are designed to awaken the intuition, the only means by which *light* can come to anyone. Printed words and the information they indicate are only "ladders" by which the learner can climb to wisdom. But in our study and application, so long as we are working for some reward—are inclined to be despondent or impatient—we shall be placing obstacles in our way.

One point in our progress involves the passing from one state of thought and action into another; knowing this we should not be dismayed nor disturbed by anything that may come to pass. It may for the time appear to the student that he is useless and his future circumstances dark and foreboding. These are only shadows of the past cast on the screen of the present. Like shadows they will pass, if we recognize them for what they are.

One's education makes no essential difference. Any man can understand *justice*. He can understand that merit is the only thing that can bring merit. Men think that the world owes them a living, opportunity, education. All we need to consider is that *we owe the world our service.*

There may, and often does come a time, when one feels like "standing on nothing, in nothing, and about to topple over." The centre of consciousness has been changed; old landmarks are slipping away, and sometimes black doubt ensues. Doubt and fear belong only to the personal consciousness; the real Perceiver, the Higher Ego, has neither. The *Gita* says: "Cast aside all doubt and fight on." And never for one moment think that you are not going on with your journey.

No one who strives to tread the path is left unhelped; the Great Ones see his light, and he is given what is needed for his best development. There are no veils on that plane of seeing.

The help must be of that nature which leaves perfect freedom of thought and action—otherwise the lessons would not be learned. It will come for the most part in ordinary ways, and from one or another of the companions with whom you were possibly connected in other lives, and whom your soul will recognize.

It is not the best thing to rely upon any *living person;* I mean to the extent of idealizing him. For if such an one should be swept into seeming darkness for a time, its effect might not be good for us, and might dishearten.

Those who are really "touched" by the inner fire are usually full of the idea of work for humanity. The desire to be and to do comes out strongly and clears the way for true and permanent growth, with its seasons of expansion and retardation—which means growth and solidification—necessary processes, as we see, in nature.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THREE IN ONE

THE fundamental Law, the central point from which all emerged, around and toward which all gravitates, and upon which is hung the philosophy of the rest, is the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause.

It is called "Substance-Principle," for it becomes "substance" on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a "principle" in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible SPACE. It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and everything. *Its impersonality is the fundamental conception* of the System. It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself.

Moreover, in Occult metaphysics there are, properly speaking, two "ONES"—the One on the unreachable plane of Absoluteness and Infinity, on which no speculation is possible, and the Second "One" on the plane of Emanations. The former can neither emanate nor be divided, as it is eternal, absolute, and immutable. The Second, being, so to speak, the reflection of the first One can do all this. It emanates from itself the seven Rays of Dhyan Chohans; in other words, the Homogeneous becomes the Heterogeneous, the "Protyle" differentiates in to the Elements.

What is called "unconscious Nature" is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (Elementals) guided by High Planetary Spirits, (Dhyan Cohans), whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *verbum* of the unmanifested LOGOS, and constitutes at one and the same time the MIND of the Universe and its immutable LAW.

"Nature," the physical evolutionary Power, could never evolve intelligence unaided—she can only create "senseless forms,". . . . The "Lunar Monads" cannot progress, for they have not yet had sufficient touch with the forms created by "Nature" to allow of their accumulating experiences through its means. It is the Manasa-Dhyanis who fill up the gap, and they represent the evolutionary power of Intelligence and Mind, the link between "Spirit" and "Matter"—in this Round.

What is called collectively *Monads* may be separated into three distinct Hosts, which counted from the highest planes, are, firstly, "gods," or conscious, spiritual *Egos;* the intelligent architects,

NOTE.—A student's collation from *The Secret Doctrine*.

who work after the plan in the *Divine Mind*. Then come the Elementals, or *Monads*, who form collectively and unconsciously the grand Universal Mirrors of everything connected with their respective realms. Lastly, the atoms, or material molecules, which are informed in their turn by their *apperceptive* monads, just as every cell in a human body is so informed. . . . For atoms and Monads, associated or dissociated, simple or complex, are, from the moment of the first differentiation, but the *principles, corporeal,* psychic and Spiritual, of the "Gods,"—themselves the Radiations of primordial nature.

It now becomes plain that there exists in Nature a triple evolutionary scheme, . . . or rather three separate schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point. These are the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions. These three are the finite aspects or the reflections on the field of Cosmic Illusion of ATMA, the seventh, the ONE REALITY.

1. The Monadic is, as the name implies, concerned with the growth and development into still higher phases of activity of the Monad in conjunction with:—

2. The Intellectual, represented by the Manasa-Dhyanis (the Solar Devas, or the Agnishwatta Pitris) the "givers of intelligence and consciousness" to man and;—

3. The Physical, represented by the Chhayas of the lunar Pitris, round which Nature has concreted the present physical body. This body serves as the vehicle for the "growth" (to use a misleading word) and the transformations through Manas and—owing to the accumulation of experiences—of the finite into the INFINITE, of the transient into the Eternal and Absolute.

Each of these three systems has its own laws, and is ruled and guided by different sets of the highest Dhyanis or "Logoi." Each is represented in the constitution of man, the Microcosm of the great Macrocosm; and it is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is.

It is the Spiritual evolution of the *inner*, immortal man that forms the fundamental tenet in the Occult Sciences. To realize even distantly such a process, the student has to believe (*a*) in the ONE Universal Life, independent of matter (or what Science regards as matter); and (*b*) in the individual intelligences that animate the various manifestations of this Principle.

letters • questions • comment

Most of the troubles people have seem to result from embracing false certainties and acting on them. Perhaps this is to be expected in a world made up of illusion, but one would like to think that there are at least some certainties that can be relied upon. Are there?

A foundation statement for considering such a question is on page 40 of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. H.P.B. says:

> Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya.

Human beings, as we see from simple observation as well as from this metaphysical formulation, are goal-seeking intelligences. It is hard to imagine them abandoning the pursuit of ends. Yet there are counsels, paradoxical to the personal consciousness, which seem to prescribe exactly that. The first rule of *Light on the Path* is "Kill out ambition," and a little later it is said, "Work as those work who are ambitious." The common-sense interpretation of this somewhat puzzling combination would be that work performed without desire for reward is work for others. While it may not be easy to form the habit of working for others, we easily admit its validity. If, indeed, such a being as Krishna, as he tells Arjuna in the third chapter of the *Gita*, remains indefatigable in action, even though there is no longer anything that it is necessary for him to do, then performing actions "without motives of interest" is ideal human behavior.

Krishna is a being without illusions. He *incarnates* for the good of others, as he explains. We, on the other hand, are brought back

to birth again and again because of past mistakes and in order to continue with learning what we need to know. Adopting Krishna as our ideal is plainly the best human course, having the same meaning as the familiar injunction, "Act for and as the Self." This conception may be accepted, but the application proves difficult. How does one let go of ambition without becoming merely indifferent? Recognizing human need and working for the good of others is the answer, but we find needs not easy to distinguish, sometimes, while the good is often not what people say they want. Moreover, it is difficult to sustain such high intentions. Krishna had or has no such problems.

What, actually, is an "illusion" of the sort to which we are continually subject? In general, our basic illusion is to see some sort of finality in a finite objective or goal. The life of a human being makes a curious paradox, since it seems a life with a destination, yet we are told that there is *no* destination, for the reason that destinations are within the self. We are to move, in short, without moving. What in us, then, is continually subject to the illusion of having a destination, of moving onward toward a goal? Not the Krishna in us, but the forms of existence by which the Krishna is confined—that portion, that is, of Krishna which, "having assumed life in this world of conditioned existence, draweth together the five senses and the mind in order that it may obtain a body and may leave it again." "I am born," he explains, "but through my own *maya,* the mystic power of self-ideation." The illusion is that of the personal man whose sense of self is defined by his vehicles. *They* have a finite existence, and when mind is added to them they naturally pursue finite goals. Our incarnated minds are involved in these vehicles, although that other portion of ourselves, the pure Krishna aspect, remains uninvolved and is thereby able to keep alive in the heart the feeling of a reality which lies beyond—*always* beyond. The presence of the timeless and infinite can be understood by finite consciousness only as that which is forever "beyond." It is this feeling or sense which keeps us pressing on through every kind of experience. In brief, we are both subject to illusion and capable of overcoming it, and this dual nature of our being manifests in successive alternations throughout the cycle of progressive awakening.

What then can we be certain of? We know, inwardly, what is

certain without being told. We know that we shall go on and on. We know that the learning of lessons never stops. We know that awakening comes by degrees, that no step of growth can be omitted. We know the law of cause and effect and also the reality of a state beyond cause and effect, both for the world and in us. We know that every end is a beginning and that the progress that takes place in life belongs to the forms of existence, not to the Self. Souls evolve, not selves. We know these things as matters of principle, and because they are not illusions but the explanation of illusions, taking into account both the finite and limitless aspects of Man.

THE FABRIC OF SPIRIT

There can be no manifestation of Consciousness, semi-consciousness, or even "unconscious purposiveness," except through the vehicle of matter; that is to say, on this our plane, wherein human consciousness *in its normal state* cannot soar beyond what is known as transcendental metaphysics, it is only through some molecular aggregation or fabric that Spirit wells up in a stream of individual or sub-conscious subjectivity. And as Matter existing apart from perception is a mere abstraction, both of these aspects of the ABSOLUTE—Cosmic Substance and Cosmic Ideation—are mutually inter-dependent. In strict accuracy—to avoid confusion and misconception—the term "Matter" ought to be applied to the aggregate of objects of possible perception, and "Substance" to *noumena;* for inasmuch as the phenomena of *our* plane are the creation of the perceiving Ego—the modifications of its own subjectivity—all the "states of matter representing the aggregate of perceived objects" can have but a relative and purely phenomenal existence for the children of our plane.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

on the lookout

Only "Islands"?

The statement in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 266) that "Lemuria was not submerged as Atlantis was, but was *sunk* under the waves, owing to earthquakes and subterranean fires, as Great Britain and Europe will be one day," gives relevance to a Reuter dispatch which appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* for Oct. 5, 1977:

> The Pacific Ocean once had a north-south chain of islands to rival the Hawaiian islands, but they were swallowed up by the sea in volcanic upheavals millions of years ago, according to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.
>
> The Institution says its research ship Glomar Challenger has discovered that the submerged Emperor sea-mountains stretching from Alaska south to Hawaii once reared above the surface of the ocean.
>
> "The evidence gathered on the ship's drilling voyage indicates that 50 to 60 million years ago these huge, extinct volcanoes were once islands rimmed with coral reefs and sandy beaches much like the Hawaiian Islands are today," the Institution says.
>
> The Emperor sea-mountains are a chain of more than 30 huge extinct undersea volcanoes. The Institution says the Glomar has found embedded in the lava of the mountains white coral sand and fossils that could only have lived in warm shallow water. The mountains are now submerged in deep, cold water.

"Visible Ruins"

It is of interest to recall here that some of the best evidence for Atlantis was dredged up, many years ago, by explorers whose work was thoroughly described by Pierre Termier in the *Smithsonian Institution Report* for the year 1915. Summarizing, Termier says:

> The fragments, thus torn from the rocky outcrops of the bottom of the Atlantic, are of a vitreous lava, having the chemical composition of the basalts and called *tachylyte* by

> the petrographers. . . . The matter was described in 1899 to the Académie des Sciences. Few geologists then comprehended its very great import. Such a lava, entirely vitreous, comparable to certain basaltic stones of the volcanoes in the Hawaiian Islands, could solidfy into this condition only under atmospheric pressure.

Geology Supports Plato

After giving further geological and petrographic evidence, Termier concludes:

> It would seem to be a fair conclusion, then, that the entire region north of the Azores and perhaps the very region of the Azores, of which they may be only the visible ruins, was very recently submerged, probably during the epoch which geologists call the present because it is so recent, and which for us, the living beings of today, is the same as yesterday.

While the dates given by such researchers may be called into question, the reality of these past land bodies in both the Pacific and the Atlantic seems fully established by hard evidence. The *Smithsonian* writer, for one, was completely convinced. "See how much," he says, "there is to encourage those who still hold out for Plato's narrative. Geologically speaking, the Platonic history of Atlantis is highly probable."

Evidence for Atlantis

In *At the Edge of History,* William Irwin Thompson reviews recent evidence for a lost continent at the bottom of the Atlantic, pointing out that the rejection of this idea by scholars illustrates a basic flaw in modern civilization: "one purchased discipline at a cost of imagination; one purchased imagination at a cost of discipline; a disciplined imagination was a contradiction in terms." The cultural historian gives his own view:

> The missing continent, like the missing particle in physics, would certainly make a lot more sense of Mexico and Peru. When one considers that Plato, the Irish legends, and the Mexican chronicles all place a civilization destroyed by the flood in the Atlantic, then M. I. Finley's flippant dismissal of "more Atlantis nonsense" becomes more difficult. It is one thing to support a fantasy of history upon the *Timaeus*, and quite another to support it from similar material from three widely separated cultures. Since many civilizations were unbelieved legends until they were uncovered, we cannot be so certain that Atlantis will not follow the example of Schliemann's Troy.

Pyramid off Bimini

In confirmation of the vitality of the Atlantis story for the reading public, a squib in the *Saturday Review* (March 18) reports publication of three new books on Atlantis, adding that "there is no dearth of articles that locate Atlantis in bizarre settings." According to David Zink (*The Stones of Atlantis*), "massive *stone* structures" have been found underwater off Bimini in the Bahamas. And Charles Berlitz, who wrote *The Bermuda Triangle,* now says that at a depth of about three thousand feet beneath the Triangle there is "a giant, Cheops-style pyramid" which "may prove Atlantis is resting on the ocean floor just East of North America." It seems evident that sooner or later the reality of the lost continent will have to be admitted, and this should have a transforming effect on all scholarly ideas concerning the antiquity and nature of man.

Scholarly Bind

Meanwhile, the reluctance of professional scholars to recognize the persuasiveness of the evidence already available has this explanation by William Irwin Thompson:

> If man has tried very hard to destroy or discredit his knowledge of the past, then it is little wonder that there can be vast gaps in which civilizations could exist without our officially approved knowledge. . . . Consciously or unconsciously, most of our Mesoamerican historians avoid the pieces of information that would unsettle their world view. . . .
>
> To be sympathetic with the Americans, one always has to bear in mind that archaeologists are always plagued with newspapermen trying to get flashy copy on lost worlds who are quite willing to embarrass the scholar by mishandling the information for effect. Inevitably, the scholar vows never to make the same mistake again and to reserve his finds for the most narrowly published scholarly journals. Unfortunately, this strategy of self-defense only encourages a rigidity against all unaccepted and unorthodox theories. Between the cracked-open minds of the enthusiasts of lost tribes, lost continents, and flying saucers and the firmly shut minds of scholars, it is very difficult to find a healthy way of using one's head.

The confinement of scholars by their assumptions is nothing new, but the result of their caution—which turns into prejudice when it comes to evidence for Atlantis—is the enormous sale of books like von Däniken's *Chariots of the Gods, which ignorant*

critics then say are an example of the influence of Madame Blavatsky!

Psychic Transition

Attempting, in his recent book, *The Life of the Self* (Simon & Schuster), to go beneath the surface of the sudden cultural rebellions and changes of the past ten or fifteen years, Robert Jay Lifton, a psychiatrist, says:

> Observe the altered definitions of manhood and womanhood taking shape not only in such experimental enclaves [the "communes"] but throughout much of society. Within a single generation we have seen the virtually exclusive male idea of the tough (even brutal), tight-lipped, fists-ready, physically powerful, hard, anti-artistic, no-nonsense, highly competitive sexual conqueror give way to the gentle, open, noncombative, physically unimpressive, soft, aesthetic-minded, indirect and associative, non-competitive, sexually casual self-explorer—with a variety of types in between. Similarly, the feminine ideal of the soft, compliant, self-sacrificing, family-oriented helpmate has given way to that of the aggressive, physically and psychically strong, self-expanding, liberation-oriented feminist. Much of the original hippie and Women's Liberation movements can be understood as exploration in broadened definitions of sex roles, so that one can be soft and tentative while still manly, hard and assertive while still womanly. This kind of experiment on the part of any of these groups must inevitably include excesses and absurdities. But in reaching for both the center and the periphery of maleness and femaleness there is a groping toward fundamental alteration of the biosocial mode of immortality.

Health in Immortality

"Immortality" is actually the central theme of Dr. Lifton's present work, as was noted here several years ago (see Lookout, August, 1973), but it is conceived almost entirely as symbolic of ultimate human longing. He quotes Jung as saying: "As a physician I am convinced that it is hygienic to discover in death a goal toward which one can strive, and that shrinking away from it is something unhealthy and abnormal;" and "I . . . consider the religious teaching of a life hereafter consonant with the standpoint of psychic hygiene." Dr. Lifton seems attracted to the most philosophic way of thinking of immortality, as belonging to those able to rise to a timeless state of being:

> More basic is the concept of transcending death through spiritual attainment. The power of spiritual life to overcome death

in some way is exemplified in all the great religious leaders around whom religions have been founded: Buddha, Moses, Christ, Mohammed. Within each of the religious traditions there has been a word to convey the spiritual state in which one has transcended death: the Japanese word *kami,* the Polynesian term *mana,* the Roman idea of noumen, the Eskimo concept of tungnik, and the Christian doctrine of grace. All these words describe a state in which one possesses spiritual power over death, meaning, in a symbolic sense, that one is in harmony with a principle extending beyond the limited biological life span.

A New Current of Thought

This forthright discussion of the importance of feelings and thought of transcendence by a modern psychiatrist represents a dramatic reversal of the typical assumptions in both medical and psychological thinking of a few years ago. It amounts to general recognition of the human longing for "release from profane life to existence on a higher plane," with all that this implies regarding the essential nature of man. While materialistic denials are still common enough among surviving members of the past generation of thinkers, the new spirit, so widely evident in the work of younger men, cannot help but open the minds of the general public to the classic philosophic themes of ancient religion.

Liberation of Mind

The more serious thinking underlying the movement for women's liberation is clearly in accord with the implications of Dr. Lifton's analysis. In *Beyond God the Father* (Beacon, 1973), Mary Daly writes critically of the dominating male anthropomorphic deity, saying:

> It is reasonable to take the position that sustained effort toward self-transcendence requires keeping alive in one's consciousness the question of ultimate transcendence, that is, of God. It implies recognition of the fact that we have no power over the ultimately real, and that whatever authentic power we have is derived from *participation in* ultimate reality. . . . The new wave of feminism desperately needs to be not only many-faceted but cosmic and ultimately religious in its vision. This means reaching outward and inward toward the God beyond and beneath the gods who have stolen our identity.
>
> The idea that human beings are "to the image of God" is an intuition whose implications could hardly be worked through under patriarchal conditions. If it is true that human beings

> projected "God" in their own image, it is also true that we can evolve beyond the projections of earlier stages of consciousness. It is the creative potential itself in human beings that is the image of God. As the essential victims of the archaic God-projections, women can bring this process of creativity into a new phase. This involves iconoclasm—the breaking of idols. Even—and perhaps especially—through the activity of its most militantly atheistic and a-religious members, the movement is smashing images that obstruct the becoming of the images of God. The basic idol-breaking will be done on the level of internalized images of male superiority, on the plane of exorcising them from consciousness and from the cultural institutions that breed them.

This is one of the means by which the debris of bigoted, anthropomorphic conceptions of deity is cleared away to make room for more self-reliant thinking.

A Writer's Integrity

The Hungarian novelist, George Konrád was the only writer now living in Eastern Europe who was permitted to attend the Venice Biennale on Cultural Dissent which took place last November and December. His statement at this gathering, which has a Tolstoyan majesty and is reminiscent of similar declarations by Boris Pasternak and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, was printed in the *New York Review of Books* for Jan. 26. In it, he says he became a writer because he wants "private conscience, and not public loyalty, to choose between right and wrong." The quality of this statement is impressive in its insistence on freedom of thought and expression, recalling H.P.B.'s approval of "the proud answer of Socrates to his judges" in "What Are the Theosophists?" Not remarkably, Mr. Konrád devotes much of what he says to the importance of saying what is true, in contrast to official state claims:

> Our means of expression is the word; the state relies on crude or subtle forms of coercion. I reject terror in any form, be it official or individual. The gallows erected by the state are not any more decent than a gun thrust out of the window of a speeding car. In our own century more than 100 million people died as a result of orders issued by statesmen. No common criminal can match this record. . . .

No Choice Among Tyrannies

> The job of the apologists of state cultures is to justify degrees of violence. To do this they must lie a lot. I try to under-

stand even the liar, but I do not want to be taken in by his lies. I am a writer; my stock in trade is irony, not ideology. The reason I try to see through deceit is not so that I, too, could become a deceiver. I did not quit one state culture to join another. . . .

I do not believe people's lives improve if a state bureaucrat, and not a private capitalist, controls production. The idea of private property does not fill me with joy, but neither does the notion of state property. There are capitalist dictatorships and socialist dictatorships; I do not believe one is better than the other. I have no desire to choose between Hitlerism and Stalinism, and do not ask if it is better to be tormented in an interrogating room which has a red star on the wall, or in one adorned with a cross.

The Courage of Citizens

The fair-minded common sense of this writer is quite clear:

But there are capitalist democracies whose stability lies not in the strength of their police or in their constitutions, but in the courage of their citizens, in their conditional and critical loyalty. Eastern Europe has a chance to achieve democratic socialism (or socialist democracy); from time to time this specter haunts the state socialist societies of that region. In theory, the two are not incompatible; there is no real reason why I should consider socialism and democracy polar extremes. The question of what portion of the total number of decisions in a society should remain state decisions is really a pragmatic one, part of the larger issue of the struggle between state and society. . . .

Ideals Must Be Free

Europe is confused; its western half no less than the eastern part. One after another, its ideologies have been exposed in their folly. . . . Each ideology promises to extend my freedom, but if I become the follower of one, I pay for its modest benefits with other freedoms. With communism comes the Kremlin, with liberalism, Wall Street, with Christianity, the Vatican. With ideals come institutional discipline and partisan dishonesty. Each one is clever when mocking its enemies, and clumsy when justifying itself. An ideal is deformed as soon as it is adopted by a system.

The world would be a dreary place and I a fool if I simply adjusted the contradictions in my own mind to the ongoing ideological struggles of the superpowers. If I did do it, in the end I would be like the World War I chaplains who argued eloquently that God was on the side of the Central Powers —or the Entente, as the case may have been. In any case,

> I couldn't decide whether I preferred a communist hydrogen bomb or a democratic one.

"A Lifelong Struggle"

George Konrád has been driven by the circumstances of his life and career as a writer to cleave to the ultimate integrity of human expression—the obligation to tell the truth. It is a simple ideal, yet one which requires both energy and sacrifice to defend:

> Lies are always up to date; they are ten thousand cunning and condemned volumes. Truth is always unfashionable; criticism and compassion in the same sentence. It is as though the same ageless man were talking through the ages, promulgating a law by continually violating the laws. . . .
>
> I would like to consider myself an independent writer, realizing that it is a lifelong struggle to strive for intellectual integrity in a world where official cultures, commercial considerations, fashions, prod me toward the commonplace, the arch-enemy of literature. With everything I write I formulate tentative answers to a question I pose every day: am I really a free writer? . . .

Truth Comes First

Toward the end of his statement, Konrád says:

> There can be no compromise. The more committed a writer is to serve—or fight against—a state, a party, a group, the greater the likelihood that his writing will drown in a melodrama and demogogic rhetoric. The writer who joins militant alliances is a masochist: he is mutilating his own gifts. Literature is always out to protect the concretely human against the most violent and stupid formulations about the abstractly human. . . . Every decent writer is a one-man party and church, which cannot be joined. Literature movements serve propaganda purposes mostly, become extinct quickly, and what remains are a few individual works.

Here, indeed, is the temper of thought which struggles to be free. In some parts of the world, to give expression to that temper is to risk martyrdom. The surprising thing is not that there are so few, but that so many dare to take this risk. George Konrád speaks for this heroic quality—a quality beyond all politics. "One thing," he says, "keeps us going: the knowledge that we are more interested in our truths than in our comforts."

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